

Palos Park Department of Recreation and Parks  
Recreational Advisory Commission (RAC) Meeting

Rescheduled

Tuesday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023, 7:00pm

Prairie Room

Minutes

**1. Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order by Stephen DeFalco at 7:08pm

**2. Roll Call**

Present: Stephen DeFalco, Nicole Milovich-Walters, Charles Wells, Mary Peterson, Loretta Gaidas

Absent: Jean Marques

**3. Approval of January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Minutes**

Charles Wells moved, seconded by Loretta Gaidas, to approve the minutes of the Tuesday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022, RAC meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**4. Confirm continuation of RAC meeting time and frequency**

No board members objected to RAC meetings remaining the third Tuesday of the month at 7pm at the Recreation Center and meet on a quarterly basis (January, April, July, October)

**5. Program Updates**

- A. Winter Recreation Guide summary was presented by Stephen. 2022-2023 Winter Season programs had a roughly 75% run rate. New programs added were youth fencing in partnership with Palos Hills. Old program offerings returning to the recreation guide included Snapology and youth basketball provided by Skyhawk.
- B. 2023 Special Events flyer was distributed highlighting upcoming events such as Chili in the Park, Family Movie Night, Brunch with the Bunny, and the inaugural Doggie Dash. Stephen also noted the work being done to attract more sponsorship opportunities including Xfinity and Republic Bank and major contributors to multiple events.
- C. Spring/Summer Recreation Guide Preview. Stephen confirmed new programming in the Spring and Summer including youth tennis, drawing through Young Rembrandts, and adult pickleball and summer camp would be coming back. The groups discussed other programs they would like to see the department offer including dance programming and some sort of theater/acting camp or class. Nicole mentioned some potential contacts for both and will provide that information to Stephen to follow up on. Stephen also discussed mailers would be coming back in the form of postcards mailed to the 60464 zip code but for financial reasons the full guide would remain online only with physical copies available at the Recreation Center and Kaptur Center.

**6. Parks and Facility Updates**

- A. Centennial Park: Due to Comcast's dumpster in the parking lot, Centennial will not be closed over the winter to ensure they have access. A dog poop bag box was installed based on resident feedback of the park's use.

- B. Recreation Center: Painting was completed in Community Room, lower vestibule, and washrooms. The sound system in the gym has a damaged amplifier and the repairs were quoted; work has not begun yet with no date scheduled as of the meeting date. Electric split unit HVAC units were installed in the Staff Office and Registration Office areas.
- C. Village Green: Stephen presented the latest design plans for the updated playground at the Village Green. The board discussed the different 3 design options and provided feedback to take certain elements from each for the ideal layout and features. It was noted the playground work is in tandem with an irrigation system for the Village Green, both of which are particularly funded by a Build IL grant and work is scheduled to be complete by Autumn in the Park. Charles asked about the max capacity for the playground and Stephen noted to look into this question. The resurfacing of the tennis courts was also discussed as the next major capital project for the department after the playground and irrigation improvements for the Village Green. Mary mentioned potential increased work with Cook County would be nice to utilize the local forest preserves in the area.

#### 7. New Business

- A. Rental Rate Evaluation: Stephen brought up the potential increase in rental rates for the Recreation Center, Village Green, and Centennial Park to go into effect in 2024. This was a previous agenda item for the 1/18/22 RAC meeting. Stephen presented comparable rental rates from Lemont, Hickory Hills, Worth, and Palos Heights (Palos Hills does not have any rentals). Mary called out Palos Heights' rates and it was decided the best comparable was the 104/106 double room instead of their Orchard Room. New rates were proposed by Stephen for the board to consider for the next meeting. A potential wedding rental package and new Palos Village Players rental agreement were also discussed. Further discussion will occur at the next meeting.
- B. Partnership with Chicago Southland CVB: Stephen met with the Sports Manager for Chicago Southland CVB to try and attract new rentals in the form of sports tournaments to Palos Park. Initial tours of the facility and grounds went well, and Palos Park will be included in the CVB's 'menu' of locations for potential sports-based rentals.
- C. Personnel: The department is moving forward in finding a full-time supervisor. As of the meeting, the department has received 6 applicants. Interviews will begin mid-February with an offer to be presented mid-March and a start date sometime in April. There is a shortage of Building Attendants and more hiring for this role is of increasing priority. Loretta recommended reaching out to older residents who may be retired looking for part-time work. It was also suggested to look at the local high school's job boards and post the position there.

#### 8. Adjournment

There being no further business, Loretta Gaidas moved, seconded by Charles Wells to adjourn the meeting at 8:45pm. The motion was carried unanimously.



4/18/2022

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Stephen DeFalco, Director of Recreation and Parks Department